

MEETING REPORT

DATE OF MEETING: June 12, 1997

GROUP/SUBJECT: Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT)

PERSONS ATTENDING: Members: Chair Jon Kvistad, Susan McLain and Ed Washington, Metro Council; Dave Lohman (alt.), Port of Portland; Don Wagner (alt.), ODOT; Dean Lookingbill (alt.), Southwest Washington RTC; Dave Yaden (alt.), Tri-Met; Mary Legry (alt.), WSDOT; Jim Kight, Cities in Multnomah County; Greg Green (alt.), DEQ; Charlie Hales, City of Portland; Mel Gordon, Clark County; Rob Drake, Cities in Washington County; Tanya Collier, Multnomah County; Ed Lindquist, Clackamas County; and Craig Lomnicki, Cities in Clackamas County

Guests: Rod Sandoz, Clackamas County; G.B. Arrington, Tri-Met; Pat Collmeyer, Neil Goldschmidt's Office; Paul Silver, City of Wilsonville; John Magnano (Passenger Rail for WSDOT/ODOT); Xavier Falconi, Tualatin Valley Economic Development Corporation; Chris Hagerbaumer, OEC; Scott Rice and Kay Walker, Cornelius City Council; Meeky Blizzard, Office of Congressman Blumenauer; Michele Thom, Dave Williams, Kathy Lehtola and June Carlson, ODOT; Nina DeConcini, DEQ; and Elsa Coleman and Steve Dotterrer, City of Portland

Staff: Andy Cotugno, Richard Brandman, Larry Shaw, Mike Hoglund, and Lois Kaplan, Secretary

Media: Gordon Oliver, The Oregonian; and Bruce Solberg, Daily Journal of Commerce

SUMMARY:

The meeting was called to order and a quorum declared by Chair Jon Kvistad.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Kvistad announced that the joint JPACT/MPAC/Metro Council Transportation Planning Committee worksession on the Regional Transportation Plan has been scheduled on Wednesday, July 16, at 5:00 p.m.

Mary Legry announced that Gerry Smith, Regional Administrator for WSDOT, has been promoted to Deputy Secretary of the Washington Department of Transportation under Syd Morrison and will be based in Olympia. He, therefore, will be relinquishing his membership on JPACT. She commented on the value of his understanding of bi-state issues. Chair Kvistad directed Andy Cotugno to draft a letter to Gerry on behalf of JPACT congratulating him on his new position.

Andy Cotugno noted that a draft *Regional Framework Plan*, mandated by Metro's Charter, had been distributed at the meeting and spoke of its relationship to the 2040 Growth Concept and the *Regional Transportation Plan* (RTP). He explained that it sets the basic policy direction for the RTP and that the land use section is tied to transportation aspects. Worksessions are planned for review of the *Regional Framework Plan*.

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Commissioner Gordon moved, seconded by Mayor Drake, to approve the May 8, 1997 JPACT Meeting Report as submitted. The motion PASSED unanimously.

1997 OZONE SEASON

Nina DeConcini of DEQ announced that kick-off activities for the 1997 ozone season will commence with a press conference on the George Rogers Park soccer field. An information sheet was provided in the agenda packet on planned activities and educational programs. Nina explained that the effort included a full complement of promotions and activities, including billboards, theater slides, car dealer commercials, radio spots, PGE's lawnmower buy-back program, carpool incentives, C-TRAN's offering of free transit service on Clean Air Action days, Tri-Met's fresh-air kits, an extensive employer network (over 200), Clean Air Action Day packets, ODOT's variable message signs on eight major freeways during Clean Air Action days, and participation by the Metro area jurisdictions toward reducing emissions. Nina asked that any questions be directed to Greg Green.

A video was presented depicting the light-hearted car dealer commercial spots.

The question of Tri-Met offering free passes on Clean Air Action days was discussed. Dave Yaden noted that unfortunately it is not an option for Tri-Met because their buses are near capacity

during the peak hour, that the service they provide is expensive and that they're not in a position to give it away, and that they would be inconveniencing existing customers. The funds they would lose could be better utilized for new buses and to provide new service.

Andy Cotugno reminded the committee of the ozone standard measures adopted by JPACT in February 1996 and approved by EPA. He reported that we are on the edge of a violation, citing two exceedances in two places last summer. There is only a cushion of one more exceedance allowed. Because of the enhanced vehicle inspection program, however, it is felt there will be more of a cushion over the next few years. If there are two or more violations, sanctions could be imposed and the contingency components of the Maintenance Plan would need to be implemented.

Andy explained that the Metro area just recently achieved ozone attainment status, but cautioned the committee not to be too complacent. EPA may adopt new ozone standards in July and the effect on the region's ability to meet the new standards is uncertain.

WASHINGTON COUNTY BRIEFING ON COMMUTER RAIL

Kathy Lehtola, Assistant Director of Land Use and Transportation for Washington County, provided a slide presentation of the railroad alignments and station locations studied in Washington County's Interurban Rail analysis. Due to increased population growth and congestion on I-5, Highway 217 and arterials in Washington County, five cities (Wilsonville, Tualatin, Tigard, Sherwood and Beaverton), Tri-Met, Metro and ODOT participated in a "fatal flaw" analysis that reviewed ridership, legal constraints and track conditions between Wilsonville and the Westside Merlo light rail station in Beaverton.

Kathy reported that ridership numbers were extrapolated from Metro's 2040 travel modeling forecasts. Estimated ridership for year 2000 is 1,850 trips/day or 484,700 trips/year. By year 2015, there would be over 2,300 trips/day or 600,000 trips/year, which does not include weekends or holidays. Kathy clarified that the base ridership does not assume any "niche" marketing (special events). She also stressed that there is bi-directional interest morning and night.

The study was called an interurban rail analysis because they wanted the consultant to look at the general ridership interest, not just commuting. Copies of the full Washington County analysis are available upon request.

Kathy reported that Washington County amended the contract with BRW to do an additional "fatal flaw" analysis on the line from McMinnville to Union Station as part of ODOT's 99W/Highway 18 analysis. She noted that there is a direct connection for transfers with the Westside light rail as part of that line.

Also looked at were institutional constraints connected with the short line operator. The effort revealed that the branch line is owned by the Burlington Northern/Sante Fe and Union Pacific Railroads.

The purpose of the fatal flaw analysis was to determine whether it would be worthwhile to proceed with a feasibility analysis.

Kathy reported on opportunities for public input at meetings scheduled before the Beaverton City Council on June 2, the Washington County Board on June 3, and the City of Tigard. She noted that public input to date has been positive. Estimated cost of the feasibility study is in the range of \$250,000.

Dean Lookingbill noted that the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council has released an RFQ for a study to determine the feasibility of commuter service between Vancouver and Portland. The study will examine critical issues in the implementation of commuter rail such as schedule reliability, operations, shared use with freight and intercity passenger needs, capital and operating costs, ridership and transit service objectives. After determining the constraints, a decision will be made on whether to pursue a demonstration program.

Commissioner Gordon commented that construction on the I-5 bridge during this fall's repair will give them an opportunity to find out the potential ridership if commuter rail is included as a mitigation action to the bridge closure.

TIP SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS ON 1997 OBLIGATIONS

Enclosed with the agenda packet was a letter to Don Aman of ODOT identifying this year's transportation obligation priorities with respect to available funding resources. Andy Cotugno explained that the obligation ceiling is kept at 87 percent in the annual Congressional appropriation and that there is a funding shortfall. He cited the region's commitment for repairs to the Hawthorne Bridge and its impact on other projects that may slip into FY 98 and FY 99. He indicated that there are sufficient resources to allow \$3 million of other Metro area projects to proceed in FY 97.

Andy reviewed Attachments 1 and 2 of the Aman letter. Projects that would be allowed to proceed were identified on Attachment 2.

ODOT has been asked to reobligate those projects. Projects under the "Rural Program Recommendation" are located outside the Metro area.

Andy cited the need to coordinate the program with ODOT and emphasized the fact that schedules will continue to be a moving target. He felt that scheduling should be made in more detail for the period of FY 98 through 2001.

TOLLWAY ADMINISTRATIVE RULES DRAFT

Andy Cotugno explained that the Legislature adopted the draft Tollway Administrative Rules at its last session. It is a detailed bill that covers requirements for tollway project submittal, financial feasibility, consistency with other state/federal policies, and process. The rules as written will apply to the I-5/Highway 99 Connector, the Newberg/Dundee Bypass, and a tollway project for the Portland metropolitan area not as yet defined. The Oregon Transportation Commission will consider adopting the rules later this fall.

Andy proposed that JPACT consider the elements of a comment letter at its July 10 JPACT meeting since the region is expected to function within the procedures of the Tollway Administrative Rule. The formal filing for public notice commences on June 13 so JPACT's comments would have to be timely and submitted within the public comment timeframe. JPACT members will be provided a copy of the revised draft as soon as it is available.

A public hearing has been scheduled by ODOT on July 17 with consideration by the Oregon Transportation Commission in September. June Carlson is ODOT's contact person.

HOUSE BILL 3163

Andy Cotugno noted that the transportation package (HB 3163) has been forwarded to the Senate for consideration. A discussion followed on whether or not JPACT wanted to take any action regarding proposed cuts of the package, which involved a change from 9 cents to 6 cents in the gas tax, elimination of the access fee, and a reduction of the registration fee increase.

Mayor Drake supported reaffirmation of the region's position that the package remain whole, that it retain its multi-modal aspect, that the needs are not being addressed, and that it is critical. He felt it is an obligation not to remain silent.

Commissioner Hales concurred, commenting that we should not give up on the access fee. Discussion followed on what would happen without the flexibility of those funds, citing the experience

with cuts to Valley Amtrak service. Commissioner Hales supported communicating the importance of the transportation package once again.

Dave Yaden expressed support of the region's past position and the importance of flexible funds as part of the package.

Commissioner Lindquist reported that only three members of the Senate Transportation Committee were present when the bill was being considered. A discussion followed on the urgent need for jurisdictions and the business community to make contact with their senators in communicating support of the entire transportation package.

Action Taken: JPACT committee members agreed that a letter should be drafted on behalf of the committee urging the senate's support of the transportation package (HB 3163) with all its elements intact. Chair Kvistad directed Andy Cotugno to draft and FAX the letter to the state senators in support of the complete transportation package.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

REPORT WRITTEN BY: Lois Kaplan

COPIES TO: Mike Burton
JPACT Members